



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee ■ John Boehner, Chairman
2181 Rayburn House Office Building ■ (202) 225-4527

<http://edworkforce.house.gov/edwatch>

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Education Establishment Skittish About Bipartisan Reform

As Congress puts the finishing touches on President Bush's bipartisan education reform bill, "the education establishment's most powerful organizations are now agitating against central elements of the measure's testing and school accountability provisions," reports this morning's *Los Angeles Times* (Ron Brownstein, Page A14, 24 July 01).

In a historic display of bipartisanship, Democrats and Republicans locked arms this year under President Bush's leadership to challenge the status quo on behalf of American students, too many of whom have been left behind by federal policies that subsidize failure and discourage parental involvement. Both the House and Senate have passed education reform legislation by broad bipartisan margins, putting the education establishment on notice that change is coming.

But meaningful reform rarely comes easy in Washington. As Rep. George Miller (D-CA) said last week: "Make no mistake: there will be a great deal of pressure from those who resist change, those who want to maintain the status quo. Change is never easy. But we have come too far, and there is too much at stake, to succumb to that pressure."

To refocus federal education resources on helping disadvantaged students, Congress must produce a final bill that is true to President Bush's principles of education reform -- one that holds states and local school districts accountable for improving student achievement.

Message of the Day

Real accountability is essential to ensuring that no child is left behind.

- ❑ *Parents should be empowered with detailed data about their children's schools, the quality of the education they're receiving and the progress their children are making.*
- ❑ *States using federal education dollars must demonstrate that they are getting results for students and that achievement gaps are closing between disadvantaged students and their peers.*
- ❑ *Washington has increased education spending for 35 years without insisting on accountability. Now is the time to change the status quo.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- A poll conducted by Peter Hart and Robert Teeter for the Educational Testing Service (ETS) found that 76 percent of the American public supports the Bush plan to require states to annually test students in grades 3-8 in reading and math.
- A recent poll conducted by the Winston Group, a widely respected GOP national polling firm, shows that Americans strongly support President Bush's testing plan by a 72-23 percent margin.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Nationally, record high levels of spending by the federal government have failed to improve student performance. The time has come for meaningful change across the country, and that means annual assessment and accountability for every child and every school. The opponents of testing would have us cling to the status quo, and I have yet to hear an argument in favor of that." **Education Secretary Rod Paige, *The Washington Post*, May 13, 2001**